INTRODUCTION

Background and rationale

In early 2014, the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault was launched by the Obama administration and shortly thereafter established the “Not Alone” program (http://www.notalone.gov), an initiative aimed at helping higher education institutions:

- Gauge their campus climate with respect to sexual assault;
- Prevent sexual assault on their campus;
- Respond effectively when a student is sexual assaulted; and
- Become more aware of the federal government’s role in the enforcement of an institution’s Title IX obligations.

The Not Alone initiative also provides support resources for survivors of sexual assault and publishes information regarding student rights, bystander intervention, and key terms and definitions related to sexual assault.

The Task Force released their first set of recommendations in April 2014 (https://www.notalone.gov/assets/report.pdf), the first of which was for institutions to conduct a sexual assault campus climate survey to evaluate students’ perceptions of safety on campus, their level of satisfaction with the education and/or reporting process, and the extent to which they have experienced college-level sexual assault.

Trinity proactively sought to administer a sexual assault campus climate survey to determine our current campus climate with respect to sexual assault to better inform decision-making regarding reporting procedures, educational and support programs, and campus safety initiatives.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND METHODOLOGY

Selecting the survey instrument

A subcommittee of the Coalition for Respect was charged with evaluating survey options. Ultimately, a survey developed by the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) consortium was selected. The HEDS consortium is a group of over 100 private institutions that “collaboratively shares, analyzes, and uses data of all kinds to advance their institutional missions” (http://www.hedsconsortium.org/), of which Trinity is a long-standing member. The survey was heavily adapted by HEDS staff from the White House Task Force’s sample survey but with the added benefit that Trinity could obtain aggregate data from other participating institutions for comparison purposes. Because many HEDS institutions are similar to
Trinity with respect to mission and enrollment, the Coalition (in consultation with Trinity staff and administrators) felt the exchange of data among “like-minded institutions” was a valuable asset that should be explored in this situation. Thus, Trinity selected the HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey (SACCS) and invited all students over the age of 18 to participate between January 15 and February 12, 2015.

Basic methodology

The SACCS instrument (https://hedsconsortium.app.box.com/sexual-assault-climate-survey) is composed of questions related to:

- Campus climate of unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault;
- Perceptions of how the institution addresses and responds to unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault;
- The extent to which the respondent has experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault;
- Demographic information; and
- Open-ended feedback from respondents.

An individualized email invitation to Trinity students was first sent in January 2015, which explained the completely voluntary and anonymous nature of the survey. If they elected to participate, students clicked on a link that took them directly to the HEDS survey. They were again advised that participation was optional and that they could stop taking the survey at any time. Throughout the survey, participants were presented with relevant key terms and definitions related to sexual assault and misconduct, as well as trigger warnings of upcoming questions that could be traumatic for respondents. Participants were also provided with local and national resources for sexual assault support at the bottom of each survey page. These resources are included in the Appendix of this report.

After submission, HEDS staff removed all identifying information from the responses, including electronic signatures (e.g., IP addresses) or any mention of specific details in the open-ended comments section that could potentially identify a student or his/her institution. Although Trinity received respondent-level data for its own students, no student IDs, email addresses, or other identifying tags were associated with these responses.

For comparison purposes, Trinity chose “Small Institutions” as its primary comparison group, which was composed of 54 institutions with 3,500 or fewer undergraduates. Because only four institutions had graduate student responses, those responses were removed from the pooled data set. Thus, only responses of undergraduate students are presented.
RESULTS

General respondent data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trinity</th>
<th>Small Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Respondents</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>19,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27% (mean)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Trinity and Small Institution respondent data.

While response rates for the small institutions are not available by gender, for Trinity University 23% of women and 14% of men responded to the survey.

In the following pages, responses to the survey items are provided, mostly in graphical form. Throughout these results, Trinity University results are displayed in shades of maroon and small institution results are displayed in shades of blue. When results are shown by gender, darker shades are used to represent men and lighter shades to represent women.
Below are statements about your views on the general climate at Trinity University [/other institution]. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each:

- I feel like I am a part of the community
- I feel close to people on this campus
- I feel valued in the classroom/learning environment
- Students are genuinely concerned about the welfare of other students
- Faculty, staff, and administrators treat students fairly
- Faculty, staff, and administrators are genuinely concerned about students’ welfare
- Faculty, staff, and administrators respect what students think

Percent who agree or strongly agree

- Small Institutions
- Trinity University
The following item from within the above question is provided to illustrate how the Trinity responses and those of the other small institutions vary by gender.

Below are statements about your views on Trinity University’s [/other institution’s] response to difficult or dangerous situations. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each:

The following example of an item from this question illustrates the typical relationships among the responses of Trinity men, Trinity women, men from small institutions, and women from small institutions.
Other items regarding the institution’s response to difficult or dangerous situations show similar patterns:

- Trinity men are more likely than Trinity women to agree or strongly agree that situations are handled well. (Average about 12% more)
- Trinity men are more likely than men at small institutions to agree or strongly agree. (Average about 8% more)
- Trinity women are more likely than women at small institutions to agree or strongly agree. (Average about 2% more)

Trinity responses are shown below:
Below are statements about your views on sexual assault at Trinity University. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each:

I believe that the number of sexual assaults that occur on campus or during off-campus events or programs sponsored by the Institution is low (TU only)

I believe that students would intervene if they witnessed a sexual assault (TU only)
I do not believe that I or one of my friends is at risk for being sexually assaulted on campus or during off-campus events or programs sponsored by the institution (TU only)
Below are statements about your views on what might happen if someone were to report a sexual assault to an official at Trinity University [/other institution]. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each:

- Campus officials would take the report seriously.
- Campus officials would support and protect the person making the report.
- Campus officials would conduct a careful investigation in order to determine what happened.
- Campus officials would take action against the offender(s).
- Students would support the person making the report.

Percent who agree or strongly agree

TU - Men  |  TU - Women  |  Sm Inst - Men  |  Sm Inst - Women
Have you received information or education from Trinity University [/other institution] about:

- What sexual assault is and how to recognize it?
- How to report an incident of sexual assault?
- The actions you can take to help prevent sexual assault, such as bystander intervention, clear communication with a potential partner, or some other action?
- The institution's confidential resources for sexual assault and how to locate them on campus?
- The procedures for investigating a sexual assault?

Percent answering "yes"
Overall, how much do you remember about the information or education from Trinity University about sexual assault?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of recall by gender for different levels of information remembered.]

Overall, how helpful did you think the information or education from Trinity University about sexual assault was?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of helpfulness by gender for different levels of perceived helpfulness.]

Since starting at Trinity University [/other institution], how often have you experienced the following forms of unwanted sexual contact while you were on campus or while you were off campus during events or programs sponsored by Trinity University [/other institution]?

*Unwanted verbal behaviors – such as someone making sexual comments about your body; someone making unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, or suggestions to you; or someone telling you sexually offensive jokes or kidding about your sex or gender-specific traits
*Unwanted nonverbal behaviors – such as sending you sexual emails, texts, or pictures; posting sexual comments about you on blogs or social media; showing you sexually offensive pictures or objects; leering at you or making lewd gestures towards you; or touching oneself sexually in front of you
*Unwanted brief physical contact – such as someone briefly groping you, rubbing sexually against you, pinching you, or engaging in any other brief inappropriate or unwelcome touching of your body

**Who was responsible for this behavior? (Check all that apply)**

- Students from this institution
- Students from another institution
- Faculty, staff, or administrators from this institution
- Faculty, staff, or administrators from another institution
- Employer/supervisor at this institution
- Other: (fill in)
Sexual Assault Definition and Statistical Caveats

The questions that followed asked respondents about sexual assault. The following definition of sexual assault was provided to the survey respondents:

*Sexual assault includes the following types of sexual contact, which you did not want or for which you did not give consent:*

- **a)** Touching of a sexual nature (kissing you, touching of private parts, grabbling, fondling, rubbing up against you in a sexual way, even if it was over your clothes)
- **b)** Oral sex (someone’s mouth or tongue making contact with your genitals, or your mouth or tongue making contact with someone else’s genitals)
- **c)** Vaginal sex (someone’s penis being put in your vagina, or your penis being put into someone else’s vagina)
- **d)** Anal sex (someone’s penis being put in your anus, or your penis being put into someone else’s anus)
- **e)** Anal or vaginal penetration with a body part other than a penis or tongue, or by an object, like a bottle or candle

Because of the relatively small numbers of students who reported sexual assault or attempted sexual assault in the following questions, as well as the relatively low response rate to this survey at Trinity, it is not possible for us to make statistically sound estimates of campus-wide percentages of students experiencing unwanted sexual contact, nor is it possible for us to determine whether observed differences are statistically significant.

Direct comparisons with assault rates from other surveys are not possible since questions and definitions vary from survey to survey.
Since starting at this institution, has anyone attempted, but not succeeded in, sexually assaulting you while you were on campus or while you were off campus during an event or program sponsored by Trinity University [/other institution]?

For Trinity University, counts are shown within the bars.
Since starting at Trinity, have you been sexually assaulted while you were on campus or while you were off campus during an event or program sponsored by Trinity University [/other institution]?

For Trinity University, counts are shown within the bars.

When you were sexually assaulted, which of the following happened? (Check all that apply)

Trinity University n=27; small institutions n=1631
Did this incident of sexual assault involve:

- The other person/people threatening to use physical force against you, or using coercion or intimidation? (Yes)
- The other person/people using physical force against you? (Yes)
- Your being given a drug without your knowledge or consent? (Yes)
- Your inability to provide consent or stop what was happening because you were incapacitated in some way (e.g., passed out, drugged, drunk, asleep)? (Yes)
- The other person/people drinking alcohol? (Yes)
- The other person/people using drugs? (Yes)
- Your drinking alcohol? (Yes)
- Your voluntarily taking or using any drugs other than alcohol? (Unsure)

Trinity University n=27
When in your academic career did the sexual assault occur?

![Graph showing the distribution of sexual assault occurrences across different academic years and institutions.]

Trinity University n=27; small institutions n=1631

Descriptions of the person/people who assaulted the respondent

Descriptions of the assailant(s) provided by the 27 Trinity respondents reporting an assault included:

- About 89% were male.
- Most were known to the person assaulted.
- 15% (4) respondents reported that a current romantic partner assaulted her/him.
- About 27% of assaults involved an assailant who was a stranger.
**Where did the sexual assault occur?**

![Bar chart showing the percentages of sexual assaults occurring in different locations.]

Trinity University n=27

**Whom did you tell about the sexual assault?**

![Bar chart showing the percentages of people who told no one about the sexual assault.]

Trinity University n=27; small institutions n=1631

All 27 Trinity respondents who reported being sexually assaulted indicated that they told someone. Most told a close friend.
At other institutions, reasons most often cited for not telling anyone were:

- I did not recognize it as sexual assault at the time.
- I wanted to forget it happened.
- I was ashamed/embarrassed.
- I did not think others would think it was serious.
- I wanted to deal with it on my own.
- I thought I would be blamed for what happened.
- I didn’t want others to worry about me.

*Did you use Trinity University’s [/other institution’s] procedures for making a formal report about the sexual assault?*

![Bar chart showing percent answering "no" for Trinity University and Small Institutions.]

Trinity University n=27; small institutions n=1631

*Themes from open-ended comments*

At the end of the survey, students were asked if they would like to provide any additional information regarding Trinity’s climate for unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault. Eighty-one Trinity students (19% of our total respondents) provided a comment.

Similar to comments from students within the Small Institutions group, many Trinity comments were aligned with one or more of the following universal themes:
• A small number of incidents can have a large impact on campus climate. Although many respondents indicated they themselves had not been sexually assaulted, they expressed strong views of the campus climate or reporting process.

• Variation within each institution often occurred. A distinct dichotomy was observed regarding many issues, including sanctions (too strict vs. too lenient), Greek life (fraternities are targeted vs. fraternities aren’t punished enough), and assumptions of guilt or innocence for both the accused and accusing students.

• Students are afraid of a biased system. Accusing students are afraid of victim shaming, and accused students are afraid of a lack of due process.

• One of many factors can discourage reporting of sexual assault or misconduct.

• Students provided suggestions to improve the education, reporting, or support process, such as expanding educational topics and counseling services.
Appendix

The following local resources were included on the survey form.

Kristin E. Eisenhauer, Ph.D., Senior Psychologist
Trinity University Counseling Services
http://inside.trinity.edu/student-success/counseling-services
keisenhauer@trinity.edu
(210) 999-7411
215 Coates University Center
One Trinity Place #85
San Antonio, TX 78212-7200

Trinity’s Counseling Services provides free, confidential consultation and short-term counseling services to enrolled students. Our services include counseling for sexual assault and relationship violence.

The Rape Crisis Center
www.rapecrisis.com
(210) 349-7273
7500 West U.S. Highway 90
San Antonio, Texas 78227

The Rape Crisis Center provides comprehensive services to survivors of sexual assault and their families. All services are free, and long-term counseling is available.